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12 September 1949

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING 10 SEPTEMBER 1949

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCESMETHODSEXEMPTION 3828  
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DATE 2007

[ ] [ ] said that the time factor was becoming important. The Combined Security Board in Athens is set up as far as is possible without personnel being there. The office space is set aside, the office is equipped and the name is on the door. There has been a certain amount of talk that this is a new security office probably connected with the merger of the services. He sees no reason why [ ] shouldn't be the first to arrive. [ ] said that [ ] could leave as soon as his passport was arranged.

[ ] [ ] questioned whether Ambassador Grady had yet announced the Combined Security Board and there was discussion on the question of the Ambassador's ordering it into existence.

[ ] [ ] said that the Albanians have two people going around Italy buying up boats. They have started a service from Trieste and will start one from Bari soon. There are also ships running from Venice. All go into Durazzo. OSO had a report that one of these boats was paid for by a dollar draft for \$7,000, on the National City Bank of New York. [ ] wanted to send a message but the OSO man said he would ask if Washington couldn't advise OPC where the \$7,000 came from. This matter should be looked into. [ ] thought someone ought to be assigned to the job of making an attempt to bribe some of the sailors on these boats to take in propaganda leaflets or otherwise work for us. They might even take people in and be a means of contact with Albania through the winter. He asked whether OPC would run afoul of OSO on such a venture. [ ] said we could do it if we had the personnel and [ ] suggested it be discussed with OSO and if they would cooperate it would be O.K.

[ ] [ ] then raised the question of propaganda and said that in his opinion the most important thing is to get the radio station set up as quickly as possible because it affords us the opportunity outside of Albania to quote Free Albania radio in leaflets. He suggested that we see if the British boat they talked to him about is available.

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If it is we would have to send over equipment for it. If this boat is not available immediately we should buy one to get the station operating. He thinks chartering is not feasible because the boat has to be altered for equipment, and the owners would wish to provide the captain and crew.

[ ] said he thought it best to use the same crews because of the talk in ports when it changes hands and is rebuilt in any way.

[ ] said that many of the problems which arise in this country don't in the Mediterranean area where there are so many boats engaged in shady transactions.

There followed a good deal of discussion on the manner in which the boat would be acquired, whether a dummy company of silent French partners would be set up, it would be under British ownership, etc.

[ ] raised the question as to who would buy the boat, whether the Committee shouldn't do it. [ ] said it would have to be done for them and suggested a French company be formed and the Committee would operate through this company which would know only that it worked for the Committee, with the exception of one person who would have to know what the boat actually was. [ ] expressed the opinion that from the security point of view it didn't really matter on the question of cover as long as the boat didn't actually ~~the~~ shore of Albania; that the most successful cover would be to make the boat illegal in its activities. Eventually any cover will wear thin and a change made. The cover story will have to depend on the boat.

The question of where the boat would be based was raised. [ ] said he thought the best place to base it was Trieste. [ ] said that it wouldn't be possible to disguise what she is doing and that it would be a matter of days before the activities were known due to the equipment. [ ] said we couldn't develop a cover story until we know what the boat is; in any case the only outward sign would be the antennas and communications say they have overcome that problem. The question of cover should not be allowed to interfere with the necessity for getting this radio operating at once. Teptani can be used for the job with the radio station. Perhaps the story can be that the boat is working with AMAG and will operate only in Greek waters. Admiral Sherman could be asked to have Navy radio technicians install the radio equipment. [ ] said he had discussed this question with Sherman, who saw no difficulty in having the Navy do any repairs necessary and install whatever equipment is needed. If the Navy personnel working on it raise questions they can be told the boat belongs to AMAG. The work could even be done at sea. The equipment needed could be shipped to JUSMAG, loaded on the boat and then the boat would go to wherever the Navy would do the work.

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Discussion of all aspects of the boat followed: possible crew, relation of Committee, size, desirability of purchasing or chartering, where the material to be broadcast would be prepared, the degree to which the boat will be self-contained, etc. [ ] suggested putting the boat at sea with nothing but long-wave relay and using VHF transmitter from the shore to the ship to provide the material to be used in the propaganda broadcasts, with the shore installation on Corfu. [ ] thought that would be possible. [ ] agreed it would be a good plan and asked if it would be possible to have Corfu the notional headquarters of the Committee. [ ] said the Committee can't be tied to either Greece or Italy. [ ] said he thought an hour a day would be enough to broadcast; the boat could be based on one of the Ionian Islands during the winter, going out and broadcasting and then going back into port. [ ] said he thought the relay idea might be the answer. Cover on Corfu could probably be set up through AMAG. The ECA is starting a program of revival of industry on Greek islands.

[ ] raised the question of the great cost of operating the type of boat which seemed to be called for in this operation. [ ] said you can buy in Bari today a schooner for £ 4000, or 112-foot Fairmile in England for £ 6000-8000 and that the question was how badly we want the radio station.

[ ] then said he thought aircraft would be much more suitable for the operation. Discussion followed and it was decided that if the equipment will fit into a plane it is a far better means. [ ] will find out about the equipment.

[ ] brought up the matter of providing the British with the gold sovereigns they have requested. [ ] said he saw no objection and it was agreed by all that the sovereigns should be obtained for the British. [ ] will get them to [ ] and it will be the problem of the British to get them out of Italy. [ ] is to be authorized to give the sovereigns to [ ]

[ ] then said that the British will take our people on Malta on the understanding that they intend to close up between 15 and 30 October. [ ] said he had been advised by [ ] that the British wished us to restrict our personnel on Malta to two as there is no guise under which Americans can appear there. [ ] said he thought it would be a great mistake not to put teams into the middle of Albania so that Kryeziu and Kupi would be kept happy. We could do it if we put in only ten men. He suggested that as soon as Kupi and Kryeziu arrive they be told they must provide five men each immediately for this. Gogo could do it for Kupi. [ ] suggested we ask the British to extend the time limit to December 1.

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[ ] said we had asked the British whether we can conduct air operations from Malta. [ ] said he had asked and had been told that the answer is no to us and to the British. He said that knowing the difficulties of organization it seems better to get a small number in immediately than to start a whole new idea. All we need is the bodies as everything else is already set up by the British. Air operations into Albania in the winter are virtually impossible. All we want to do is to get the teams into Albania and we stand a better chance of accomplishing it if we follow the British plane. It was decided [ ] would be asked to find out if the time can be extended on Malta and that in the meantime recruitment of Albanians for teams to go in immediately would get under way.

The question of the base at Cyrenaica was then discussed.

[ ] said the talk with Bevin will take place in the next few days; [ ] said Mr. Offie advises Bevin had not made a second refusal but had said he didn't want to reconsider the question until he got to Washington. When it was suggested that Mr. Berry would be the person to talk to the Turks if that became necessary [ ] said Berry had said a better person would be Gen. McBride.

If we get Cyrenaica it will be up to us to supply the bulk of the material that goes into the camps, maintenance, supplies for drops, etc. This raised the question of a boat to bring the supplies in, the amount of supplies, availability of Navy ships, type of rations, where the rations should be purchased, etc. In this connection Mr. Low emphatically denied ever having discussed rations with Gen. Van Fleet and said the requisitions on rations which were referred to by cable from Athens were probably a mix-up on Van Fleet's orders for rations or some he intends to turn over to us. In any case he ordered no rations.

[ ] asked if the British had given up the idea of security troops as a cover for the camp. [ ] said he hadn't been so informed. [ ] will check with [ ] as he thought [ ] had told us.

[ ] said he thought we would have to have two officers who would work in each country from which we plan to recruit Albanians to arrange for documentation, etc. They wouldn't have a great deal of trouble in Italy but in Greece most of them will have to be taken out clandestinely unless the IRO will help. He doesn't think the people at the Combined Security Board should be connected with this. The same two people could go from country to country and when they have finished the recruitment leave the area entirely. No one who is going to be permanently connected with FIEND should be mixed up with the recruitment. The IRO man in Greece is very cooperative and might be willing to say the Albanians recruited there are going to an IRO transit camp en route to South America. All the people we want are in IRO camps but the Greeks maintain police control over them. When the CSB is operating we should be able to get the necessary documentation. There are so many operations going into Albania now it doesn't matter if the Greeks know something about this.

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[ ] said on the question of propaganda he thought the Committee needs two paid propagandists, one in Europe to handle any press relations and to continue to feed stories to the various papers and conduct the Committee around. He recommended Michael Wilson. [ ] had no derogatory information on him and [ ] will be asked to check him here.

On the Committee headquarters in New York, they will have to have an office. [ ] said that Frasheri and Nuci Kotta could remain in New York. He thought it would be operationally helpful too because the Committee couldn't make any decisions if they are split up. The Committee should be told their official correspondence will be handled by pouch but even then they are sure to write voluminously to each other. Before the Committee arrives it should be decided what they are to be told about the seat of the Committee, funds available, etc. We should go through a fund raising as a matter of cover.

[ ] said he felt the question of Dosti or Skandi should be regularized before the Committee discusses their status with DeWitt Poole. This will be taken up with Mr. Markham later in the day.

The problem of getting Frasheri to go visit Zog came up, was discussed but no decision arrived at.

[ ] asked how Mr. Fultz was to appear to the Committee. After a good deal of discussion during which [ ] said the Committee should discuss operations in any way as we had agreed with the British that both they and we would be present during such talks, it was decided that [ ] would continue to be the official representative, Mr. Fultz would appear as a friend of Albania and Mr. Markham as the contact with the New York Committee. Both Mr. Fultz and Mr. Markham should thoroughly understand that there is to be no discussion of business with the Committee in order to prevent the Committee's trying to play one person against the other. Only [ ] is authorized to discuss business with them and he will postpone answering their questions "until the British are present". It was agreed that Low would introduce Fultz and Markham to the Committee, probably at the dinner he is giving for the Committee.

[ ] will explain the mix-up about Dosti to the Committee. He requested that a statement be prepared for the Committee on the establishment of their New York office. He said the Committee will bring up the question of a newspaper printed in Albanian. It was decided such a paper was desirable and that it should be printed in the U.S.

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[ ] asked about money for the Committee. [ ] said he gave them \$200 each in Rome and paid their hotel bills in Paris. The British took care of their hotel bills in London, bought their tickets and will give them money for expenses to the U.S. We will have to give them money here. [ ] suggested giving them \$500 each as they have practically no clothes and will want to buy things here. It was agreed to do this and that Mr. Fultz would pay their hotel bills.

[ ] asked about American reporters. [ ] said the language problem arises on that. The Committee was briefed for the Paris conference and the same answers should be given to any questions asked here. The Committee will be reviewed on this by [ ]. It was decided it was most unlikely that the press would show any interest at all in the presence of the Committee in this country. [ ] suggested the Committee might see some in Congress, possibly Senator Connally and that Frasceri might bring up the possibility of visiting the State Department. He will be told he will have plenty of time to do that later as he will remain in the U.S.

[ ] and [ ] departed and shortly thereafter [ ] also left. The others awaited the arrival of Mr. Fultz.

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